NEWS RELEASE

OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY
WESTERN DISTRICT OF MISSOURI

TODD P. GRAVES

Contact Don Ledford, Public Affairs ● (816) 426-4220 ● 400 East Ninth Street, Room 5510 ● Kansas City, MO 64106
www.usdoj.gov/usao/mow

OCTOBER 5, 2004
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

JUDGE CONVICTS FELON
OF ILLEGAL POSSESSION OF STOLEN FIREARM
AT CONCLUSION OF BENCH TRIAL

SPRINGFIELD, Mo. – Todd P. Graves, United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, announced that a Fairplay, Mo., man was convicted in federal court today of being a felon in possession of a stolen firearm.

 Christopher Barker, 20, of Fairplay, was found guilty following a bench trial before U.S. District Judge Richard E. Dorr this morning.

Following the presentation of evidence in **Barker's** trial, U.S. District Judge Richard E. Dorr found **Barker** guilty of being a felon in possession of a firearm on June 12, 2003. Judge Dorr also found Barker guilty of illegally possessing stolen firearms.

Specifically, **Barker** was in possession of 10 firearms, including six rifles, three shotguns and one pistol on June 12, 2003. Under federal statutes, Graves explained, it is illegal for any felon to be in possession of any firearm. **Barker** has a 2001 criminal felony conviction for stealing in Polk County, Mo.

At the time of his arrest, **Barker** was observed unloading a number of firearms from a vehicle and bringing them into a room at the Economy Inn in Springfield. Law enforcement officers responded to a call regarding the incident and made contact with **Barker**. During the course of an investigation, law enforcement officers located nine long guns in the motel room and a pistol in the vehicle. It was subsequently determined that the rifles and shotguns were stolen firearms, Graves said.

This case is being prosecuted by Special Assistant U.S. Attorney James J. Kelleher. It was investigated by the Springfield, Mo., Police Department and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives.

****

This news release, as well as additional information about the office of the United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, is available on-line at
www.usdoj.gov/usao/mow